Ministerial Conference of WTO held recently at Doha from 9th—14th November 2001 recognise the proposals relating to the movement of natural persons among various others in the context of the on-going negotiations on trade in services.

(d) The Indian delegation at the Doha Conference expressed its concerns on various issues including agriculture, textiles and services. On the agricultural negotiations, India called for elimination of large-scale domestic support and trade distorting subsidies by developed countries and removal of all unfair barriers to farm exports from developing countries. At the same time, India stressed that our concerns relating to food and livelihood security and rural development are adequately taken care of. Similarly in services, it was pointed out that facilitating the movement of professionals must receive priority attention. India also exhorted the WTO membership at Doha to make sincere efforts in resolving the outstanding implementation related issues and concerns or giving clear directions on how to deal with them.

Creation of Food Security Box

946. SHRÌ C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the response of the WTO to Government's demand for creation of a "Food Security Box" under the Agreement on Agriculture, for food security and livelihood concerns of developing countries;

(b) WTO's response to the Government's demand for sufficient flexibility for domestic policy measures by the developing nations; and

(c) whether Government have considered the need for protecting and promoting the interests and rights of the women under WTO regime especially the lower strata particularly in rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) India in its proposals submitted to the WTO for the ongoing negotiations under the Agreement on Agriculture, has demanded creation of a "Food Security Box" so as to take care of its

food security and livelihood concerns and has, *inter-alia*, sought sufficient flexibility for domestic policy measures taken by the developing country members for alleviation of poverty, rural development, rural employment and diversification of agriculture. A group of developing countries, namely, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Pakistan, Haiti, Nicaragua, Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka, Al Salvador, Peru have also mooted a proposal for a 'Development Box' which also basically aims for flexibility for developing countries to safeguard food security and rural development. The negotiations, which began from January 2000 are scheduled to conclude by January 2005. The Doha Ministerial Declaration of 14th November 2001 has also acknowledged the development needs of developing countries including food security and rural development.

(c) There are no differential provisions in the WTO based on gender. However, the need for preserving flexibility in domestic policy measures to preserve and enhance rural development in developing countries, which would also benefit women in rural areas, has also been highlighted by India in the ongoing negotiations on Agriculture.

Export-Import Scenario

947. SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's trade deficit widened in the first half of the current financial year;

(b) if so, the details of export-import figures in the period under question; and

(c) the details of export-import figures and the figures of trade balance in the preceding three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) Yes, Sir. As per the provisional data available from the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI&S), Calcutta, India's trade deficit has increased, in US